BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Aortic aneurysm is an abnormal enlargement or bulging of the aorta, the body’s main blood vessel.
- Aortic aneurysms may lead to serious complications including rupture, which can be life-threatening if not discovered early.
- Risk factors for aortic aneurisms include:
  - male gender
  - age over 60
  - smoking
  - history of aneurisms in other family members

SYMPTOMS

- Most people with aortic aneurisms do not have symptoms. They are usually discovered by doing a screening ultrasound.
- Symptoms may include pain in the chest or abdomen. Some patients notice a pulsation in the upper part of their abdomen.
- If aneurysms rupture, they are usually very painful and are considered a medical emergency.

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

- The most common test used to diagnose aortic aneurysm is an abdominal ultrasound or echocardiogram.

TREATMENT

- Treatment depends on the size of the aneurysm.
- If the aneurysm is less than 5 cm (or 2 inches) and not growing rapidly, your doctor will probably recommend a repeat ultrasound every 6 to 12 months.
- Surgery to repair the aneurysm is generally recommended when they become larger than 5.5 cm as they are at higher risk for rupture.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or to make an appointment at URMC Cardiology at Highland Hospital, please call (585) 341-6780 or visit us online at www.highlandheart.urmc.edu